Department of Administration

DISC Newsletter

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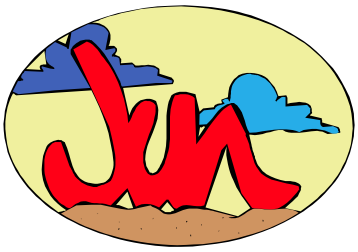
An Information Periodical For DISC Employees



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DISC NEWSLETTER

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Section Articles

We will be presenting articles from sections within DISC each month. For June the articles are from BDAS; SHARP and STARS

SHARP By Sarah Gigous

The SHARP unit provides application program support for the Statewide Human Resource and Payroll (SHARP) system as well as providing a bi-weekly payroll for the approximately 25,000 state employees. The SHARP unit was implemented in December 1995 using PeopleSoft's HRMS/Payroll software package (Release 4.0). Since then, the SHARP system has seen changes through the PeopleSoft releases from release 4.0, all the way to an Internet-based release 8.0.

Release 8.0 brought with it a more friendly user environment. State employees can now use the Internet to access the Employee Self Service feature. Through a secure sign on, employees may view their Benefits Confirmation Statement, Personal Information, Training Summary, Leave Balances, Paycheck, Total Compensation Statement as well as update W-4 Tax Information, update their Profile, complete the Benefits Open Enrollment process or even request a W2 reissue. A future implementation of release 8.9 is sure to bring an increase in functionality and further simplify the already affable Internet-based application.

The SHARP unit also provides custom programming support for the bi-weekly payroll of some 30,000 Regents employees. Each Regents Institution calculates pay and then interfaces their pay information to SHARP. The Regents year-to-date balances are updated in SHARP and paycheck print files are created and sent to DISC Operations for printing.

In addition to payroll support, the SHARP unit is responsible for year-end W2 processing. The unit maintains programs that reconcile all year-to-date balances and produce W2 year-end forms. Approximately 72,000 W2 forms are generated each year for both State and Regents employees. All files required by the Federal Government are also created.

The SHARP unit is composed of six Application Progammer/Analysts, a Security Administrator and one "acting" Programmer/Analyst Supervisor, as described below.

Sarah Gigous: Sarah came to work for DISC in June of 1992. Sarah has worked in many different areas of SHARP, including Payroll, W2 processing and HR. With the recent retirement of supervisor Tim Griffin, Sarah has enjoyed a new duty of acting supervisor in his stead. Sarah's husband, Dave, is the owner of Heartland Electric. They have 3 daughters, Lacy, Stephanie and Abby. Her oldest daughter Lacy is getting married this September. In her spare time Sarah and her husband are remodeling the home they purchased in December.

Kathy Cummings: Kathy has worked for the State of Kansas for 27 years. She has been with DISC since February 1985. Kathy serves as a lead programmer in the HR area of SHARP as well as backup for the acting unit supervisor. Kathy and her husband Mike have been married for 27 years. They have one daughter, Jolene, who is currently employed with KDOT. When not at work Kathy enjoys spending her time with family and friends.

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SHARP continued

Jodi Tritsch: Jodi has been working for the State of Kansas for 25 years, 12 of those with DISC. She serves as the lead programmer for the General Ledger process, the Regents Payroll and Payroll Interfaces. When not at work, she enjoys spending time with her two daughters, who will both be attending Topeka High this fall, relaxing at Lake Wabaunsee, watching movies, and anything to do with art.

Paxton Lopeman: Paxton came to work for the SHARP unit in July 1995. Paxton is currently the lead programmer in the Payroll area of SHARP and has gained a vast knowledge of PeopleSoft, UNIX, and Oracle. He serves as a knowledge resource to other programmer/analysts in the unit. Paxton was born and raised in Chanute. He graduated from Pittsburg State University receiving his Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems. His hobbies include hunting, fishing, playing volleyball and jet skiing.

Debra Harrop: Debra came to work for the SHARP unit in July 1997 and provides programming support in the HR Benefits area. Debra plays a major role in the Benefits Administration and Benefits Open Enrollment processing. Debra was also involved with the implementation of the AKSESS Web Open Enrollment system. Deb loves spending time with her four-year old daughter, Marie. They enjoy camping, softball games and feeding the ducks.

Larry Workman: Larry came to work for the SHARP unit in July 1995. Larry provides programming support in the HR area. Larry also works on special Ad Hoc reports for the legislature, Salary Increase and several Interface processes. Larry likes to travel to Las Vegas to visit his family and attend Star Trek conventions.

Josh White: Josh came to work for the SHARP unit in February 2002 and provides programming support for the W2 processing, Regents Payroll Interfaces and General Ledger areas as well as support for the Employee Self Service web application. Josh graduated from Fort Hays State where he played baseball. He still enjoys being involved with sports. He currently works for Ken Berry at the Sports Zone teaching hitting and catching to young athletes.

Truett Reed: Truett was a member of the original SHARP HRMS 4.0 Implementation Team and spent 17 years with the Division of Accounts and Reports. He then spent 5 years consulting as a PeopleSoft Certified HRMS Consultant. He came to work for the SHARP unit in July 2002 at the start of the PeopleSoft Upgrade from 7.02 to 8.0 SP1. Truett developed the SHARP Application Security for PeopleSoft 8.0 SP1. Truett is also a PeopleSoft Administrator. He is responsible for all SHARP Application Security and applies/migrates PeopleSoft's Tax Updates and HR Bundles to the different SHARP environments. Truett's main hobbies are bicycling and reading.

BDAS STARS & SetOffs UNIT by Cathy Jones

Patty Copeland, Jenney Hahn, Gretchen Hefner, Julie Niehues and Liang-Huei Fan work hard to support a number of Department of Administration applications. Two of those are mission critical applications, STARS and SetOffs.

STARS, the STatewide Accounting and Reporting System, is a legacy system which was purchased from a vendor and installed in Kansas in April of 1990. The application has been maintained by DISC staff, for the Division of Accounts and Reports, since installation. The software includes both batch and on-line components and uses COBOL, CICS and VSAM. STARS serves approximately 1500 statewide on-line users. About 250 nightly STARS batch cycles are run each year, and the system generates well over a million payments to vendors annually.

In FY03, A&R collected over $15 million in delinquent debts for state agencies and other governmental entities. Through May of this year the **SetOffs** application has already resulted in the recovery of over $18 million. This application also generates significant revenue for the Department of Administration. SetOffs software was written in-house and the current system was implemented in February of 1996. Both STARS and SetOffs are large, complex applications which require the availability of 24/7 programming support.

In addition to these large applications, the unit supports a number of small mainframe applications running on the DISC host including STARS Ad Hoc, Motor Pool, Satellite Warrants, 1099s, Fiscal Note Tracking, Regents' Edits and electronic deposit for DOR and DHR.

With 27 years of service to the state of Kansas, **Patty Copeland** began her information technology career as a programmer for Department of Revenue. Patty later served as a contract programmer at CTG and CTA. She joined DISC in September of 2000. Patty provides primary support for STARS and backup support for SetOffs. When Patty isn't working she is spending most of her time rehabilitating a beautiful older home in the College Hill area which she and her husband Bob recently purchased.

Jenney Hahn worked for GTE Data Services for about 3 years before joining DISC in May of 2000. Jenney is currently working to replace a number of stand-alone FOCUS programs run by users. She also provides support for STARS and she is our resident expert on JobTrac scheduling software. Jenney has a number of interests including wine making, scrap booking and gardening. She is also working to prepare her border collie Kensy for dog agility competition.

In 1982 **Julie Niehues** began working in the field of information technology at Sante Fe. She was later promoted to a computer programmer position with Santa Fe where she worked until 1993. Prior to joining DISC Julie worked for CTA on several Y2K related projects. She has almost 8 years of state service and has been with DISC since January of 2001. Julie provides primary support for SetOffs and she also supports STARS. Julie and her husband Denis stay very busy with their three daughters' track meets, cheerleading practice, field trips, etc.

Gretchen Hefner began her state service at Kansas, Inc. in 1994. She later accepted her first information technology related position at CTA where she provided administrative support for information technology projects. Gretchen returned to state service in September of 2000 when she came to work for DISC as a programmer/analyst. Gretchen supports STARS and a number of smaller applications. Gretchen's outside interests include film making, literature, photography and music.

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BDAS STARS & SetOffs UNIT CONTINUED

Liang-Huei Fan has 18 years of state service. He joined DISC in 1986, working as a programmer/analyst in the Information Technology Center. He later worked for Accounts and Reports, returning to DISC in 1996. Liang-Huei assists users who call the SHARP security help desk and serves as a backup for the SHARP security administrator. He also has primary responsibility for SHARP migrations. Liang-Huei and his wife, also a programmer/analyst at SRS, have two grown daughters. His hobbies include reading and church activities.

We are fortunate to have these dedicated hard-working people in the BDAS STARS & SetOffs Unit. Our customers benefit from the valuable knowledge and many years of experience they bring to their work.

PHISHING FOR THE BIG ONE By Doug Quinn

According to a survey by market research group Gartner, almost 2 million Americans have had their online checking accounts robbed in the past year. The total losses may be higher that $2 billion.

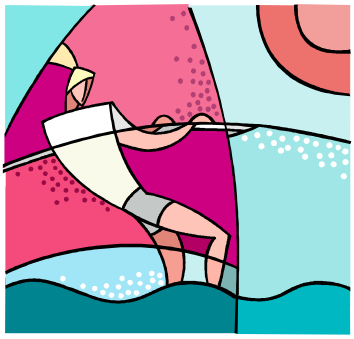
Gartner blamed online banking for a most of the problem. According to Gartner there is no back-end fraud detection solution for online banking right now.

People are under constant siege from phishing e-mails, which attempt to steal user names and passwords by imitating e-mail from financial institutions. A Gartner study showed at least 1.8 million consumers had been tricked into giving up personal information in phishing attacks.

BE AWARE, banks and other institutions that do business online by credit card or online checking, **DO NOT** contact customers via e-mail to update their account information. Remember the old warning about not giving out your credit card or social security number to anyone who calls you? The same warning applies to the computer. The e-mail may look official, or have the company's logo but, if someone contacts you and asks for that information, they are trying to rob you, plain and simple.

Phishing is not the only way criminals get into online bank accounts. They also write programs that steal passwords and account information. These programs install themselves on computers through e-mails with viruses attached. The best advise is to delete any e-mail with an attachment from anyone you do not know. Even if it is from someone you know, don't automatically open an attachment. If the message is not personalized, is out of the ordinary for that person, or simply says something like "check out this link" delete it. Another method is to take images of canceled checks from online accounts to create counterfeit checks.

Apparently the American banking industry is not doing enough to prevent this. Articles about similar industries in foreign countries describe a weekly, or even daily, changing pin number, and then the use of a password to access information. Customers are given a card with randomly selected pin numbers for each period on the card to use. Criminals would have to know the pin number and password to get the information. This is very similar to the type of security our military forces use with authentication tables and daily changing access codes. Let' be careful out there!



EMPLOYEE INFO

Happy June Birthdays to:

Duncan Friend

Joan Engelken

Judy Niccoli

Jason Marsh

Dallas Brown

Tony Vargas

Kent Dugan

Dean Carson

Lisa Cameron

Chas Good

Eric Smith

Births

Hercules

Born May 20

Kevin Tralle's Son

Kendal & Kylie

Born May 23

John Lowrey's Daughters

Deaths

Shirley Perry's Son-in-Law

We are so sorry for your loss Shirley. We wish you, your daughter and entire family the best during this difficult time.

Department of Administration

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Meeting Our Customer's Needs

Kudos

BOT

To: Dan Glotzbach, Eric Hollaway, Evan Desbien, Dwight Tolbert, Clayton Kinnett, Bryce Warner, Bill Kelly, Craig Srna, Rick Willoughby, John Lundin, Chuck Engel.

I just wanted to tell all of you how proud you should be of the wonderful ceremony to commemorate Brown v. Board yesterday. All of our out-of-state guests were so impressed with the hospitality and the wonderful organization and couldn't believe that we had only 6 days advance notice. I know a lot of you put in extra/extra hours, and took on all sorts of duties, but the result was magnificent! Kansas was shining across the country and the world and the visuals were really stunning - we looked like the diverse America that everyone dreams about and was the goal of the Brown decision.

I said at the Historic Site event that I am honored each and every day to serve as Governor of this great state, but no day has made me prouder than yesterday. I am so grateful to all of you. Please share this e-mail with those on your team who don't receive it directly. Hopefully you can get some well-deserved rest before the next event, but please know that your efforts were noticed by everyone who had the privilege of participating.

Kudos continued

BAS

To: Larry Caldwell
Thanks Larry for all your hard work in obtaining the research information for the new E911 statute.
From: Juliene Maska, Governor's Office

BOT

To:
We had a problem in the Harrison building this weekend, and noticed that DISC folks were there on Sunday and they all had a great attitude to get the job done of wiring our new building for telecommunications.
From: Ben Nelson, KDOT

BAS

To: Jennifer Sauer
I just reviewed a copy of the telecom handbook. Good job. It should be very helpful in assisting agencies manage telecom resources more effectively and efficiently. Thanks for your dedication and hard work.
From: Carol Forman, Deputy Secretary of Administration

BOT

To: Rick Willoughby and Craig Srna
I know others on your respective staffs were involved in the Kerry visit, please express our appreciation for their hard work and dedication to making this project happen. The "can do" attitude in DISC always seems to manifest itself in situations like this, it seems the tougher the task; the more resolve people have to make it work. I suspect very few people involved in this event understand the complications involved in bringing voice and data connectivity to someplace with no facilities, especially in two days. Tell everyone thanks for their hard work and effort to make this a success
From: Bill Kelly, DISC

Great Job Everyone!!